City of Lafayette
Staff Report
Transportation & Circulation Commission

Meeting Date: April 21, 2025

Staff: **Patrick Golier, Transportation & Circulation Program Manager**

Subject: **TAR Appeal: Crosswalk at St. Perpetua School on Hamlin Road**

Summary
In November 2024, staff received a Transportation Action Request (TAR) form from a representative of St. Perpetua School on Hamlin Road requesting that the City address pedestrian safety concerns in the vicinity of the school and parish. The concerns expressed in the TAR were focused on the existing crosswalk that is used for access between the school, parking lots, and playing fields. More specifically, the TAR mentioned crosswalk lettering and striping that is faded and cracked, and excessive vehicle speed in the vicinity of the school.

The specific request to address the concerns was that the City re-paint the crosswalk markings and install speed humps on Hamlin Road.

Subsequent to the submittal of the TAR form, traffic delineators at the approaches to the crosswalk, in the form of flexible delineator posts in the centerline were requested, similar to the treatment in front of Springhill School.

The requested improvements were denied by staff, and in response, the requestor submitted an appeal to the staff decision to deny the TAR.

Background
In 2021 the City worked with the school, community members and Commissioners from the Transportation & Circulation Commission to consider safety improvements along Hamlin Road in the vicinity of St. Perpetua School. At that time, safety issues at the crossing between the parking lot and the school were discussed, with several potential solutions considered. As confirmed in 2021 by both the Transportation & Circulation Commission and City Council, the recommended treatments that were installed include:

- A rapid flashing beacon crossing to alert drivers of pedestrians intending to cross
- Additional signs in advance of the crosswalk with a “PEDS IN X-WALK” message that lights up when activated
- A speed radar sign to alert downhill drivers of their speed.

Since 2021 staff has also reduced the speed limit within 500 feet of the school as part of a citywide effort to reduce speed limits in school zones across Lafayette. Speed limit reduction had been another request of the community from the 2021 effort.

Finally, "SCHOOL XING" markings are present and clearly visible on the approaches to the crosswalk.

These treatments are supplemented during peak times by crossing guards.

Analysis

Vehicle Speeds

In response to the TAR, vehicular speeds were measured on Hamlin Road on the approaches to the crosswalk. This analysis considered vehicle speeds on weekdays in 2024 in the months when schools were open (January – May, and September – December).

The measured vehicular speeds on weekdays during the school year at this location include:

"Downhill" direction: located approximately 75 feet in advance of the crosswalk at 3440 Hamlin Road:

- The average speed (50th percentile) is 19 mph
- The 85th percentile speed (the speed at or under which 85% of drivers are traveling) is 23 mph

"Uphill" direction: located approximately 75 feet in advance of the crosswalk:

- The average speed is 19 mph
- The 85th percentile speed is 24 mph

While every street has outliers in terms of vehicle speed, the data suggests that speeds in both directions immediately preceding the crosswalk are appropriate.

Collisions

There have been no reported collisions along Hamlin Road in the past five years.

Observations

On Tuesday, February 25th, Staff met several representatives from St. Perpetua School on-site to observe conditions at the crosswalk during the afternoon pick-up period. Staff arrived at approximately 2:45 pm in advance of a 3:05 pm school closing time. Staff remained on site until approximately 3:30 pm in order to observe the entire pick-up period activity.

Discussions with school representatives at that time included information about aggressive driving and a lack of driver awareness of the crosswalk. Additional input included comments that some parents conduct illegal u-turns and/or park in red zones on Hamlin Road.

While discussions centered around solutions, staff and the attendees did not come to an agreement about the safety issues that needed to be addressed. Staff did not observe safety issues that would justify an investment in additional measures beyond the significant capital improvements that are currently present along the street.

Recommendation

Given that measured vehicle speeds in the reasonable range and that Staff did not observe driver behaviors that demonstrated an urgent safety concern, Staff asserts that the existing safety measures on the street are acting as intended, and that additional safety measures are not warranted.

To review, measures that have already been installed along Hamlin Road in the vicinity of St. Perpetua School include:

- Painted school zone high-visibility crosswalk
- 'SCHOOL XING' markings in both directions in advance of the crosswalk
- Pedestrian Crossing paddle in the centerline of the crosswalk
- A rapid flashing beacon crossing to alert drivers of pedestrians intending to cross
- Additional signs in advance of the crosswalk with a "PEDS IN X-WALK" message that lights up when activated
- A speed radar sign to alert downhill drivers of their speed
- Reduced (15mph) school-zone speed limit
- Crossing guards during school pick-up period

The TAR requests, as additional measures to those already provided, that:

- Delineators be installed at the crosswalk to physically narrow the crossing width.
- Speed Humps be installed in advance of the crosswalk
- Red curbs be refreshed to communicate to drivers that parking along Hamlin Road is not permitted
- A banner or flag to make drivers aware of the crosswalk be posted along the existing fence along the north side of the street (School responsibility)

Staff response/recommendation:

- **Delineators:** While delineators are relatively inexpensive to purchase and install, they tend to result in the need for frequent maintenance, requiring ongoing time from Public Works crews.
- **Speed Humps:** Speed humps were considered in 2021. However, speed humps were precluded due to the steep grades of Hamlin Road. Speed humps on steep streets come with safety implications given the increased impact force caused by the incline.
- **Refresh Red Curbs:** Existing red curbs are visible and not in need of repainting at this time.
- **Driver Education (Flag/Banner):** St. Perpetua School is permitted to install a flag or banner along the existing fence line as long as it complies with the Lafayette Municipal Code.

Recommendation

Support Staff TAR determination on Hamlin Road.

Attachment:

1. Transportation Action Request (TAR) Form: Hamlin Road

ATTACHMENT 1

Transportation Action Request: Hamlin Road

RECEIVED
NOV 19 2024
CITY OF LAFAYETTE
ENGINEERING DEPT.

CITY OF LAFAYETTE
Transportation Action Request Form

Engineering Department, City of Lafayette, 3675 Mt. Diablo Blvd. Ste. 210, Lafayette, CA 94549

Name	MAX STARNITZKY		
Mailing Address	3317 N. LUCILLE LN.	City/Zip LAFAYETTE 94549	
Email		Organization (if applicable)	ST. PERPETUA CATHOLIC SCHOOL

Location of Problem (Provide street name and cross street(s) or other locational information.) If needed, attach a simple map showing the location.

ST. PERPETUA CATHOLIC SCHOOL AND CHURCH.
3445 HAMLIN RD., LAFAYETTE.

Description of Problem (sight distance, traffic signal, crosswalk, bike lanes, walkways, on-street parking, etc.) Attach a sketch, if needed, to clarify the problem.

CROSSWALK LETTERING AND STRIPING FADED AND CRACKED. EXCESSIVE VEHICLE SPEED IN SCHOOL'S VICINITY, WITH A CROSSWALK HEAVILY TRAFFICKED BY CHILDREN AND ADULTS.

Suggested Change or Improvement (signs, guard rails, traffic signal, pruning, pavement marking, speed enforcement, prohibit parking, etc.)

RE-PAINT CROSSWALK MARKINGS, INSTALL SPEED HUMPS.

☑ Location Map Attached ○ Sketch of Problem Area Attached ○ Petition Attached (if required)

Form Revised 09/05/2024

* PLEASE SEE ATTACHED LETTER AND LOCATION MAP.

Max Starnitzky
3317 N. Lucille Lane
Lafayette, CA 94549

November 15, 2024

Engineering Department, City of Lafayette
3675 Mt. Diablo Blvd. Ste. 210
Lafayette, CA 94549

Dear Sir or Madam:

I am writing on behalf of the Safety & Security Division of the St. Perpetua Catholic School Board. The topic at hand is pedestrian safety in the vicinity of our school and parish.

St. Perpetua School is located at 3445 Hamlin Road. The school's classrooms, faculty offices and church are positioned on the south side of the street, while the main parking lot, basketball courts, recess/ recreation area, sports field, garden and parish offices are located to the north. There is one crosswalk across Hamlin Road connecting the two primary spaces that make up the entire St. Perpetua School and Church campus.

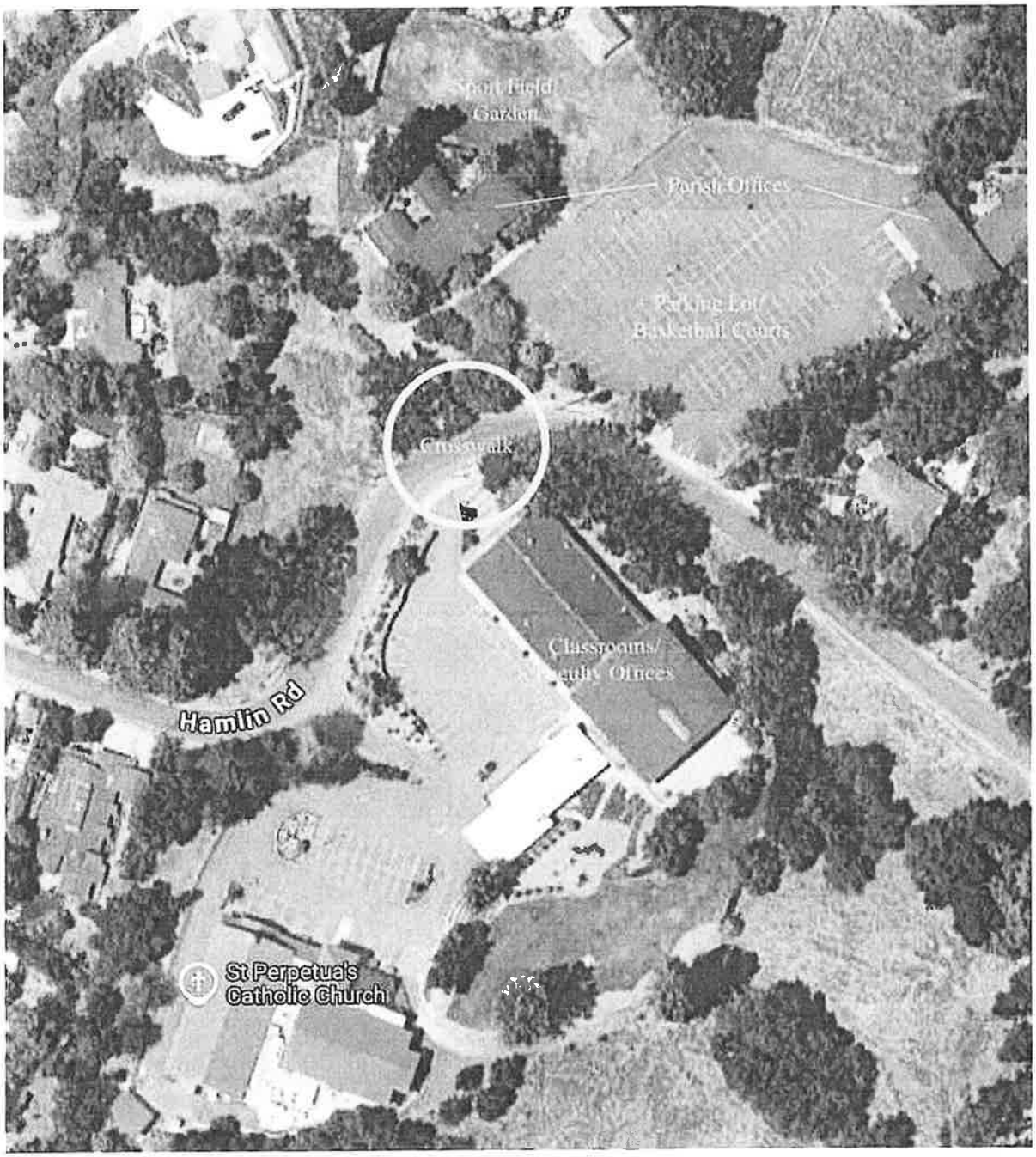
Because the campus is divided by Hamlin Road, the crosswalk in question is used heavily every day, throughout the day, by faculty, staff, parents, parishioners and, mostly (and most importantly) by children. Examples include teachers taking classes of children across the street for recess, P.E., gardening etc., and parents parking in the upper lot to drop off and pick up their children before and after school. Hundreds of children and adults use this crosswalk throughout the day, every day.

This section of Hamlin Road is located on a partially blind turn and furthermore on a hill, which is conducive to vehicles constantly exceeding the speed limit. Although the crosswalk is marked, (however the paint in the lettering and striping is severely cracked and faded) and crossing guards are employed during peak times, the measures in place have proved to be insufficient on various occasions. Most notably, on the evening of September 30th, a speeding vehicle careened out of control, crashed, and destroyed a concrete barrier nested into the hillside below the south side of the school, a mere 60 feet from the school's entrance. Fortunately instances thus far have not resulted in injury or worse to any of our children, but more needs to be done.

I am submitting this Transportation Action Request to petition the city to install speed humps leading up to the school and repaint the lettering and striping marking the crosswalk. It is my hope that taking these steps toward protecting our children, families, and staff will help prevent a potentially disastrous and devastating event that would surely be an avoidable tragedy. Thank you kindly for looking into this matter on behalf of the St. Perpetua Catholic School and Church.

Respectfully,

Max Starnitzky
Board Member, St. Perpetua Catholic School


Sport Field
Garden
Parish Offices
Parking Lot/
Basketball Courts
Crosswalk
Classrooms/
Faculty Offices
Hamlin Rd
St Perpetual's
Catholic Church